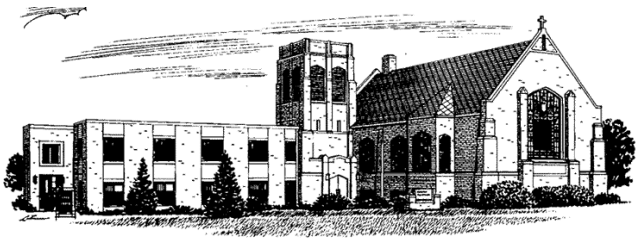
SARON NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook: www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph



December 2015

Thank you to all who made the anniversary celebration a wonderful day. From those who helped plan worship, to the dinner and program, as well as those who helped get the word out! Working behind the scenes were Amanda Bradley, Kathie Bradley, Mary Alice Brunner, Irma Gorman, Karen Hinckley, Judi Huff, Karen Johnson, Mary Kynast, Marcus Roll, and Constance Slater. Thank you! It was a great day and enjoyed by lots of folks. We thank Bishop Satterlee who joined us for the day and proclaimed a word about the church as people. And, he challenged us to be the feisty people we know we can be!

Ours is an incarnational theology. We believe that God came in the flesh to live and dwell among us. God came in Jesus - loving us, forgiving us, calling us to be God's people. God came as a baby to live and grow and experience the joys and pains of humankind.

We live an incarnational theology as we respond to God's call to be Jesus' followers and reach out to our neighbors for the sake of the world. We may think we know how to do that after 140 years. Truth is, God is always doing something new in and around us. We now look forward to what comes next, as we *joyfully share God's love for all!!!*

We celebrate Advent, which means "coming." It is the beginning of a new church year. It helps us prepare for Jesus' birth – the word made flesh. As we await his coming, we do so as people with hope, willing to share with a world in need.

Pastor Joan

The Rev. Joan Oleson, Pastor
Home: 269-983-2475
Email: oleson@saronlutheran.org

Marcus Roll, Senior Choir Director,
Bell Choir Director
Email: mroll@saronlutheran.org
Irma Gorman, Organist
Margaret Froehlich, Administrative Assistant
Denise Cook, Financial Secretary
Krista Blaylock, Child Care

Sundays at Saron:
During the School Year:
8:30 & 11:00 A.M. Worship
Childcare provided
9:40 Learning for Ages 2 – Adult

Summers (thru Labor Day weekend):
9:30 Holy Communion
Childcare provided
No Learning Hour

All are welcome!
We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Rev. Whayne Hougland, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia

Saron's Mission:
Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!

Caring and Sharing

In Our Prayers –

We remember in our thoughts and prayers: **Arla Huelsberg** is at the Whitcomb Tower Retirement Center, St. Joseph; **Ev Maki** is at Caretel; **Lila Roethel is** at the Willows; **Dorris Doutt** is at Woodland Terrace, Bridgman.

Serving in the military:

Andy Wedde – North Carolina

Office Hours at Saron
Margaret (secretary): Mon-Tues, 9 AM - 1 PM
Weds of Newsletter Week, 9 AM - 1 PM
Volunteers: Weds, 9:30 AM - 11 AM+
Denise (financial secretary): times vary
Call for other times/changes
Pastor: most mornings, except Fridays
When Pastor is out of town, emergency pastoral care information can be obtained by calling the church office (983.1273) or contacting the president of the congregation.
Note: E-mails meant for Pastor should be addressed to oleson@saronlutheran.org. E-mails to Margaret and the church office should be addressed to info@saronlutheran.org.

Happy Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members in December 2015.

Dec. 2 - Thelma Reifschneider
Marilyn Klann
Victor Coar
Jason Crockett
Dec. 4 – Phil Standen
Dec. 5 - Alexander Breyen
Dec. 6 - Rachael Nadeau
Dec. 7 - Dana Riley
Lorraine Mikesell
Adam Maly
Dec. 11 – Robert Deaton
Dec. 12 – Cynthia Brown
Edward Brunner
Dec. 13 - Eric Standen
Deborah Standen
Dec. 16 – Charles Pater
Dec. 18 - Heather Pudell
Dec. 27 – Burton Pearson
Oliver Fortenbacher
Dec. 30 - Gretchen Oleson
Madison Dipert
Dec. 31 - Kristen Harper

Anniversary Wishes to Saron's Members In December 2015.

Dec. 18 – Dennis and Colleen Lundgren
Dec. 26 – Brian and Marybeth Culverhouse
Dec. 30 - Mark and Judy Wedde

***"God's Blessings for a very happy day and* year round"**

If there is anyone who has been omitted, or, if the dates are incorrect from the birthday and anniversary list, please call the church office at 983-1273. Thank you.

TIME TO RENEW THE LUTHERAN MAGAZINE

The Lutheran Magazine is a place where members receive views on faith, Scripture, mission, advocacy and more. The magazine is a resource for education, outreach and evangelism while providing a forum for discussion on issues of the day. *The Lutheran* keeps us informed of events and issues impacting Lutherans. Subscribers also have access online to more than 9,000 archived articles and 400 Study guides.

Those that have been enjoying "The Lutheran" magazine this past year or those who would like to begin receiving "The Lutheran" will be able to purchase or renew for the price of $9.00 a year. Please make out a check to Saron and write "The Lutheran" in the memo area of your check or place cash in an envelope with your name, amount enclosed and the words "The Lutheran." This can be handed in to the office or placed in the offering plate. We want to get all of the subscriptions in as soon as possible so that there will be no lapse in current subscriptions.

ELCA GOOD GIFTS

Have you ever thought of giving someone a goat for Christmas, or a pig? Or, perhaps giving a Biogas stove in honor of one you love? Perhaps it's a fruit tree seedling that you would like to give. ELCA Good Gifts will help you give such a gift and help fill the needs of our church and the world.

Check out
https://community.elca.org/elcagoodgifts

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

Sunday December 6 –
Second Sunday of Advent
Malachi 3:1-4
Luke 1:68-79
Philippians 1:3-11
Luke 3:1-6

Sunday December 13 –
Third Sunday of Advent
Zephaniah 3:14-20
Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18

Sunday December 20 —
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Micah 5:2-5a
Luke 1:46b-55
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-55

Wednesday December 24
Nativity of Our Lord
Christmas Eve
Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-20

Thursday December 25
Nativity of Our Lord
Christmas Day
Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1:1-12
John 1:1-14

Sunday December 27 —
First Sunday of Christmas
1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Psalm 148
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

Service of Healing

Worship on Sunday, December 6, will include a service of healing.

Nursery Help Needed

With our Fall schedule of two services, we are in need of more help for the nursery. Krista Blaylock is our paid child care provider. But we need a volunteer for each service so that there are 2 persons in the nursery at all times. If you can help, please sign up at church or let Marilyn Lucy or Krin Jurgensen know of your willingness. We'd like 8 volunteers for early service and 8 for late service so that you need serve only once every 2 months.

PRAYER GROUP

Join us on Mondays at 11:00 a.m. for a time of quiet reflection and prayer, which includes lifting up the requests offered on Sundays at worship. We meet in the sanctuary.

POINSETTIA PLANTS

You are invited to purchase a poinsettia that will help beautify Saron's chancel at Christmas. You may pick up your plant(s) after the Christmas Eve service December 24th**. ORDER DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 14Th**. Call the church office for more details or pick up an order form in the Sunday bulletin.

Learning

book *of* faith
Open Scripture. Join the Conversation.

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

Wednesday Bible Study

The Wednesday group will not be meeting in December. Join us again in January.

Thursday Bible Class

We will meet again in January!

EPHESUS BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The next meeting of Ephesus will be on Sunday, December 13 at 3:30pm at the home of Charlie and Linda Pater, 7932 S. Lakewood Drive, Coloma, MI. The Pater's will also be our leaders as we study lesson 5 "Cross/Where God Is" in our "Animate Faith" study. Please RSVP to Linda Pater at lindapater@hotmail.com or 269-468-3303

Adult Inquirer's Class

A gathering for those interested in learning more about the Christian faith from the Lutheran perspective or joining Saron is planned for Sunday, December 6th at 9:40 a.m. If you are interested, please let Pastor know.

Men's monthly Bible Devotions and Breakfast

Men's Bible Devotions/Breakfast will meet December 5th at 9:00 a.m. at the church. Gather at Saron for a devotion followed by breakfast at a local restaurant.

Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study

Saron's Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study will not be meeting in December. For more information call Bob Kynast at 269-921-2786 or David Slater at 269-281-0848.

1ST SUNDAY BOOK CLUB

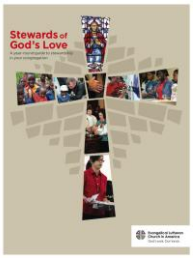
Mark Sunday, December 6th, 6:30 p.m. on your calendar and come join us in the upstairs lounge. We will be discussing, "*The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry*", by Gabrielle Zevin. This is the tale of a lonely bookstore proprietor whose life takes an unexpected turn. It's a heartwarming tale about the thrill of second chances. Fikry makes it even more interesting by beginning each chapter with the title and description of a story the book obsessed Fikry has read. While reading, you can't help counting how many of those stories you yourself have read.

We will not meet in January. "*The Pearl That Broke It's Shell*", by Nadia Hashimi is the February book. (Please note that we will gather again on February 14th, the second Sunday, instead of our usual first Sunday.) This book is very timely as it is a look at the unspoken lives of Afghani women. More about this selection in the January 2016 newsletter. Hope you can join us. We always have a lot to discuss with each other. You can contact Kathie Bradley (kbradley15@hotmail.com) or Kathy Cowall (kcowall@hotmail.com) for more information.

"Some books should be tasted, some devoured, but only a few should be chewed and digested thoroughly*". (Francis Bacon)*

Support

STEWARDS OF GOD'S LOVE



You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest commandment. And a second is like it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Matthew 22:37b-39

December….. a time when we naturally begin thinking of Christmas "stuff": decorations, gifts, specialty foods, parties, budgets. "We all have varying amounts of money and stuff… Money is a powerful resource because it has the ability to take our heart with it. As Jesus said, 'Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.'"

ELCA Stewards of God's Love, p 20

How is God calling us to use our treasure, our "stuff"? As we schedule our weeks ahead, let's purposefully set an intention to use our "stuff", our treasure, to celebrate the birth of Christ, honor and serve God and our neighbors, and also enjoy the Christmas season by sharing our 'treasure' in God pleasing ways.

God's work. Our hands.

A Special Message for Travelers and Those Who Prefer Electronic Giving

Saron offers the option to give electronically for your convenience. Please contact the church office if you have any questions or to enroll. Thanks.

STOCK DONATIONS

Saron partners with Scottrade, a brokerage firm, to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, contact our representative, Bill Fuentas, at (574) 272-1980. The statements we receive from Scottrade do not identify who donated the stock so please notify Dave Bradley or Denise Cook when you have donated. This allows us to complete the transaction and to be sure it's added to your giving statement. If you have further questions or concerns contact Dave Bradley or Denise Cook.

ENDOWMENT FUND

The Endowment Committee elected to not make any additional distributions in the fourth quarter. In the last couple of months previously approved distributions supported God's Gift our Hands and funded the addition of windows in classroom doors and installation of whiteboards.
Saron's Endowment has provided over $43,000 in support of the church globally, locally, and within the congregation.

As a reminder, contributions to the Endowment Fund can be made by cash, check, or securities in the same way as weekly offerings. You are also encouraged to remember the Endowment Fund in your estate planning. Two members of the Endowment Committee, John Olson and Matt Gacek, have served the constitutional limit of two terms. We thank them for their service to the congregation.

Hospitality

Sign Up for Refreshments

Please consider signing up for refreshments to be served after worship on Sundays. There is a sign-up sheet on the Narthex bulletin board.

Outreach

Michigan Blood Drive

Mark your calendars for FEBRUARY 2016, your next opportunity to save a life through the gift of blood.

A BIG THANK YOU

Cold, winter days are coming! Thanks to former longtime member Arden Basselman, and the "Alcona County Needle Crafters" many Benton Harbor Area School students will have a new knitted winter hat! A total of 114 hats and 8 pair of mittens were given to Saron for distribution. What a blessing this group is to their community and to ours! "God's Work. Our Hands."

Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen

Saron's "Soup Kitchen Day" is the 4th Thursday of the month, which of course is Thanksgiving!! I feel so blessed and thankful for all of Saron's faithful and generous volunteers .Thank you, Marlene Schalon, Ruth Ball, Kathie Bradley and Deb Standen for baking pumpkin pies, for our friends at the Soup Kitchen to enjoy on Thanksgiving!
Blessings to all, Jan Stevens

LARGE cans of fruit are always needed for our day at the Soup Kitchen. THANKS!

SAVE THE DATE!

March 11 and 12, 2016 LIFETOUCH will be photographing our members for a new pictorial directory.
**** If you will be out of town on those dates, you may be photographed at other area churches by calling 1-866-756-0887, or contact Jan Stevens @ 429-2044 for more details.

LWR Fair Trade

We support Lutheran World Relief Fair Trade farmers through our selling of coffee, tea, and cocoa at cost. We have flavored coffee, decaf, medium and dark roast coffees, black and green teas, and now we are offering Keurig cups. Please support this ministry by purchasing these products regularly for yourself and as gifts. Thank you.

Women of the ELCA

Deborah Circle

Deborah Circle will not meet in December. January 13th, 2016, is the date for the Christmas Party at the home of Mary Kynast.

SARON CHURCH WOMEN BAKE SALE

Saron Church Women will be having a bake sale in the church narthex on Sunday, December 6. One-half of the proceeds will go to the Mentor Family Fund, used to provide assistance for families/ individuals in need. The other half will go to ELCA Good Gifts. Please bring a bake item or items and, hopefully, make a purchase. This would be a good time to make Christmas treats. We will continue to collect for the fund on the following Sunday, December 13. Thank you in advance for your support. It is very much appreciated. Contributions to the Mentor family fund are accepted throughout the year.

Facilities

GOLDEN HAMMERS NEED HELP!

Golden Hammers is a group of volunteers that meets every Wednesday from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. at the church. They are women and men that gather to do various jobs in and outside of the church that help keep Saron looking good and also saves the church a considerable amount of money. Work includes folding bulletins, preparing the monthly newsletter for mailing, preparing the sanctuary for Sunday service, minor maintenance and some light cleaning/vacuuming. We really need some additional helpers, both men and women. It is a good fellowship opportunity as well as helping to maintain God's house. Please consider helping and if you have any questions talk to Bill Oleson or Pastor Joan.

HELP NEEDED AFTER SECOND SERVICE

Please consider helping out once every other month with the important job of securing our building after the second service. The job would be to lock all the outer doors, turn off lights and check a few areas in the building. It does not take long and usually you only are assigned once every other month if we have enough help. This is a job that needs to be done and we cannot expect our Pastor to have that responsibility. If you can help or you would like to find out more about the job please contact Janet or Bill Oleson.

Council News

Attendance Record	
11/01/2015	*110*
11/08/2015	*91*
11/15/2015	*123*
11/22/2015	*66*
11/29/2015	*82*

Saron's Council Members – 2015

Mary Kynast (428-0148) – President
Jan Stevens (429-2044) – Vice President
Dave Bradley (427-70834) – Treasurer
Mary Alice Brunner (248-767-9026) – Secretary
Mary Alice Brunner (248-767-9026) – Worship*
Jack Houser (556-0377) - Learning*
Eric Standen (556-9629) – Facilities*
Ken Ark (269-369-4766) – Facilities*
Scott Gaspari (847-373-8825) – Youth*
Austin Kamala – (269-930-5989) – Youth*
Joyce Marquardt (408-8650) – Support*
Dave Bradley (427-70834) - Support
Frieda Williams (556-7269) – Hospitality*
Jan Stevens (429-2044) – Outreach*
Joan Oleson (983-1273 office;
983-2475 home) – Pastor
**liaison*

Liaision Statements:

Facilities
Create a physical environment that will support our ministry

Hospitality – Inclusivity and Welcoming
Offer for all, Christ's radical hospitality.

Worship
Provide enhanced relevant worship experiences.

Outreach
Serve our community with 100% participation of those who worship at Saron.

Youth
Strive to encourage each of our youth to grow into their unique potential for a Christ centered life.

Learning
Center our lives in Christ through life-long learning

LOOKING AHEAD

Saron's annual meeting will be held Sunday, January 24th, 2016 after the 2nd service. Mark your calendars!

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR DECEMBER 2015

Dec. 6 8:30 a.m.
Assisting Minister: Eric Standen
Reader/Intinction: Jim Manore
Acolyte: Carter or Danielle Hohman
Ushers: Eric and Deborah Standen
Nursery: Krista Blaylock and Hanna Strayhorn

Dec. 13 8:30 a.m.
Assisting Minister: Sue Rood
Reader/ Intinction: Karen Hinckley
Acolyte: OPEN
Ushers: Fritz Knauf and Steve Bell
Nursery: Krista Blaylock and Mary Alice Brunner

Dec. 20 8:30 a.m.
Assisting Minister: Wendy King
Reader/Intinction: Sally Schmuhl
Ushers: Keith Stevens
Acolyte: Brandon Burrow
Nursery: Krista Blaylock and Allison Rood

Dec. 24 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve
Assisting Minister:
Reader/Intinction: Matt Bradley
Ushers: Dave and Kathie Bradley
Acolyte: Danielle or Carter Hohman
Nursery: Krista Blaylock

Dec. 25 9:30 a.m. Christmas Day
Assisting Minister:
Reader/Intinction: Jim Oleson
Ushers: Eric and Deborah Standen

Dec. 27 8:30 a.m.
Assisting Minister: Pauline Ngonyani
Reader/ Intinction: Sue Rood
Acolyte: Jenna Henderson
Ushers: John and Kerrie Hoodlebrink
Nursery: Krista Blaylock and Marilyn Lucy

Dec. 6 11:00 a.m.
Assisting Minister: Denise Cook
Reader/Intinction: Dan Fortenbacher
Acolyte: Meredith Gacek
Ushers: Peter and Karen Johnson
Nursery: Krista Blaylock and Lindsay Gaspari
Building Closing: Ken Ark

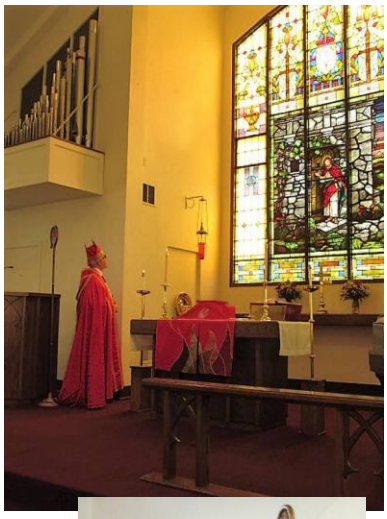
Dec. 13 11:00 a.m.
Assisting Minister: Bill Oleson
Reader/ Intinction: Bob Kynast
Acolyte: Austin Kamala
Ushers: John Olson and Ken Ark
Nursery: Krista Blaylock and Krin Jurgensen
Building Closing: Bruce and Linda Huff

Dec. 20 11:00 a.m.
Assisting Minister: Tyler Cook
Reader/Intinction: Frieda Williams
Ushers: Krin Jurgensen and Darlene Kiessel
Acolyte: Grant Gacek
Nursery: Krista Blaylock and Judi Huff
Building Closing: Bob and Mary Kynast

Dec. 24 10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve
Assisting Minister: Marilyn Frey
Reader/Intinction: Colleen Lundgren
Ushers: Jerry and Ruth Stelling
Acolyte:
Nursery: Krista Blaylock and Deb Standen
Building Closing: Dennis and Colleen Lundgren

Dec. 27 11:00 a.m.
Assisting Minister: Colleen Lundgren
Reader/Intinction: Denise Cook
Ushers: Dave and Sue Bailey
Acolyte: Austin Kamala
Nursery: Krista Blaylock and Ruth Stelling
Building Closing: Dave anfd Kathie Bradley

Thank you for your willingness to serve. If a conflict arises for your scheduled time, please find a replacement or change with another volunteer. Calling the church office (983-1273) to alert us to changes will help us keep the bulletin as accurate as possible and know that everyone is in place on a Sunday morning



Congratulations to Michael and Laura (Miller) Chaddock married at Saron on November 7.

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email:info@saronlutheran.org

A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

December 2015

We're on Facebook! Like us at
www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

Mid-week Advent Activities
"Prayer"
Wednesdays, Dec. 2, 9, 16
6 p.m. Supper; 6:45 p.m. Evening Prayer
Activities Following Worship: Dec 2 – Advent Craft; Dec. 9 – Church Decorating; Dec. 16– Singing of Carols

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
Sunday, December 13; 11:00 am
(Regular Worship at 8:30 am)

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP
Thursday, December 24; 7:00 & 10:00 pm
Candlelight and Holy Communion

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP
Friday, December 25; 9:30 am
Holy Communion

December 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Weekly Holy Communion and Children's sermon		1	2 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00pm.Soup Supper 6:45pm Advent Service	3 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Senior Choir Rehearsal	4	5 9:00 a.m. Men's Devotion/Breakfast
6 Second Sunday of Advent 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship & Service of Healing 9:40 a.m. Sunday Church School Classes 6:30 p.m. 1st Sunday Book Club	7 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	8 7:00 p.m. Support Committee	9 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00pm.Soup Supper 6:45pm Advent Service	10 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Senior Choir Rehearsal	11	12
13 Third Sunday of Advent 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship 11am Children's Christmas Program 4:30 p.m. Ephesus Bible Study Group	14 Newsletter Articles due 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group 7:00 p.m. Saron Council Meeting	15 3:30 p.m. Vasa Meeting at Saron	16 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00pm.Soup Supper 6:45pm Advent Service	17 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Senior Choir Rehearsal	18	19
20 Fourth Sunday of Advent 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship 9:40 a.m. Sunday Church School Classes	21 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	22	23 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers	Christmas Eve 24 7:00 & 10:00 p.m. Worship with Communion	Christmas Day 25 9:30 a.m. Worship with Communion	26
27 First Sunday of Christmas 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship NO Sunday Church School Classes	28 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	29	30 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers	31 *New Year's Eve*	NOVEMBER S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	JANUARY2016 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31